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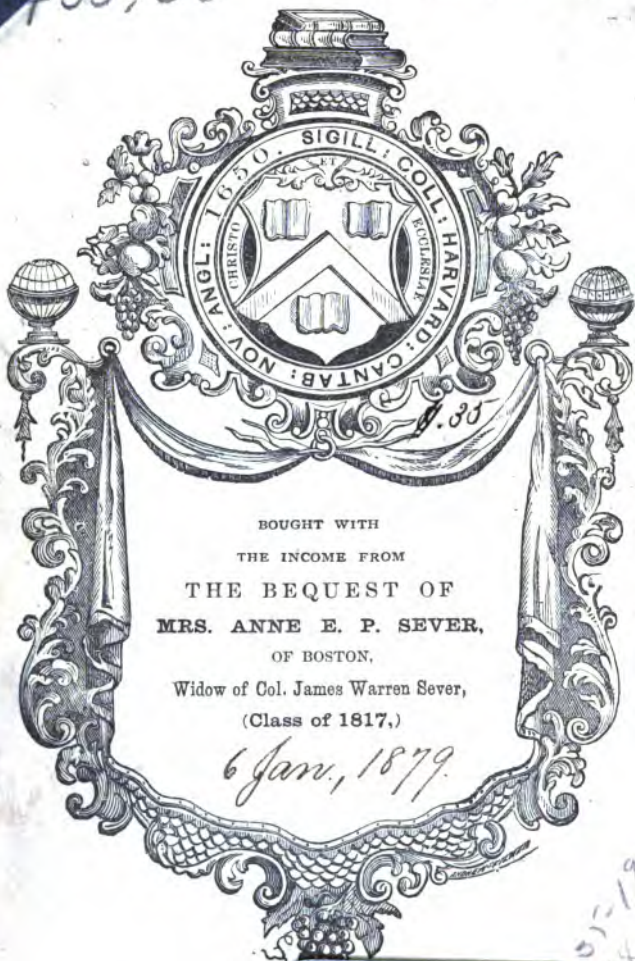
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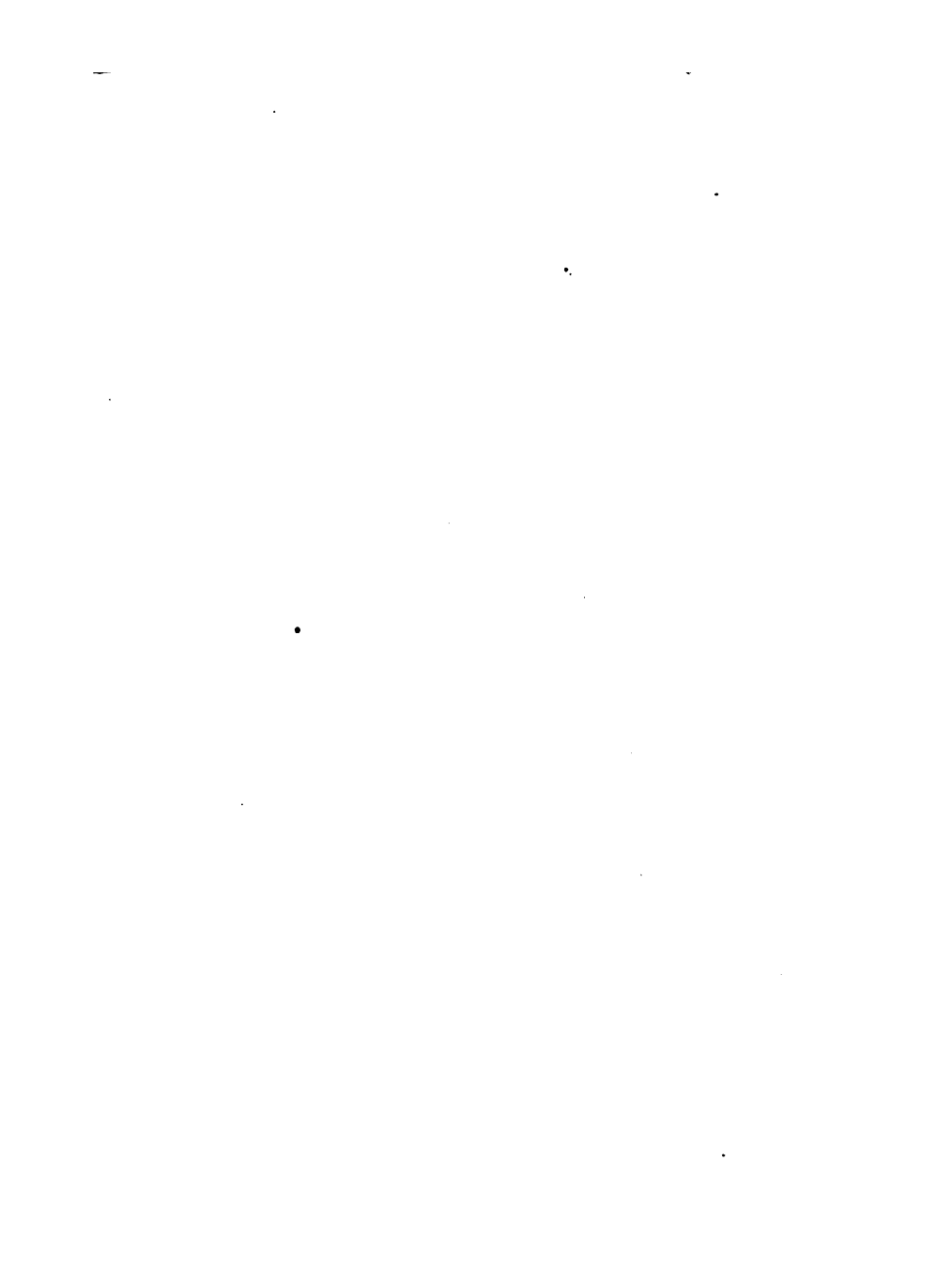
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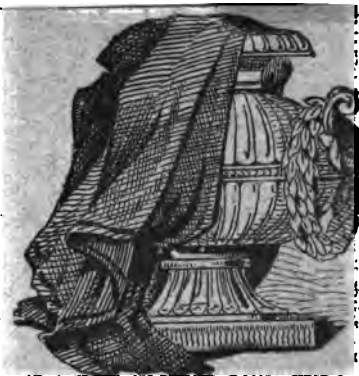
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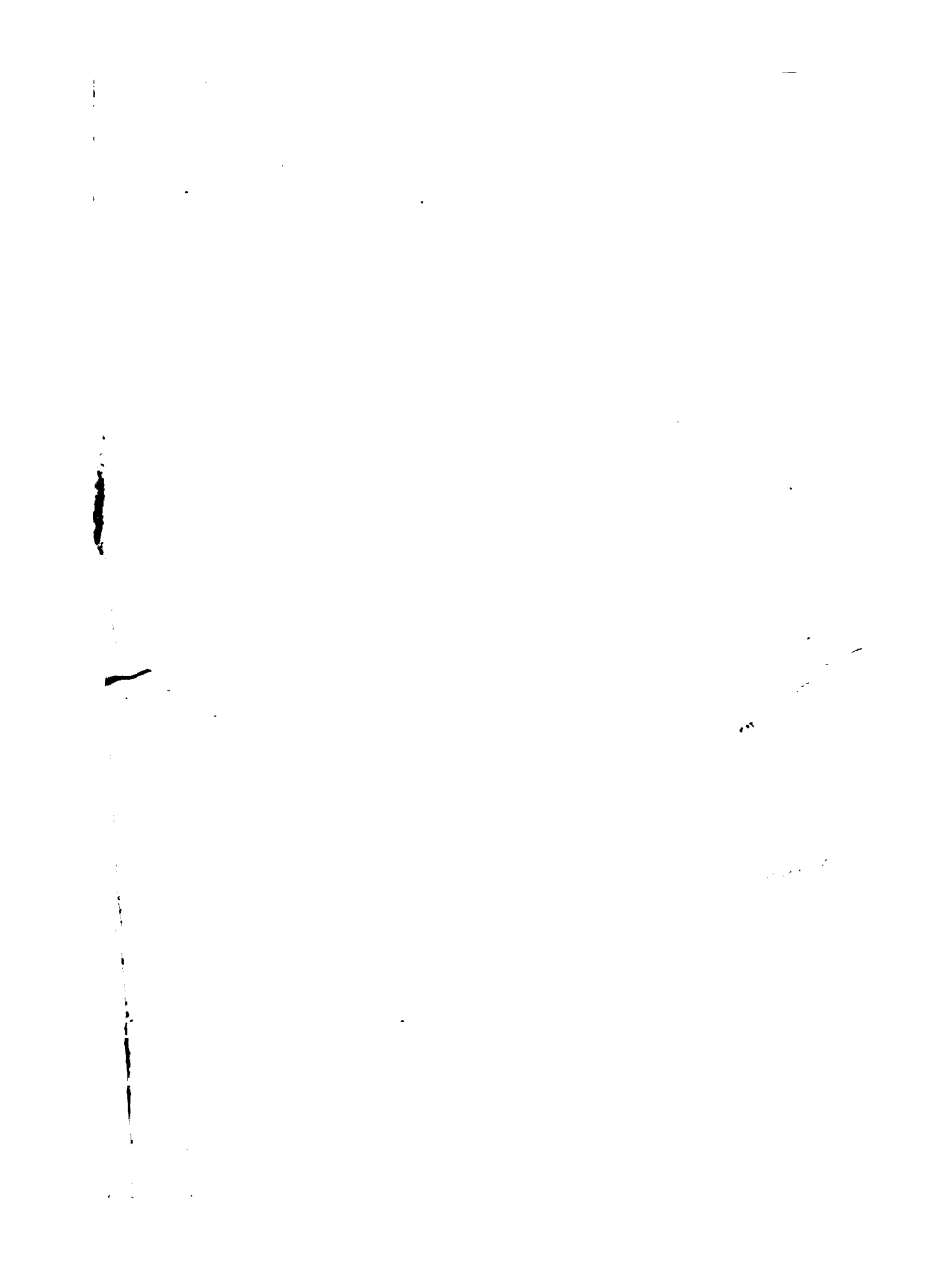
# *RU'Y BLAS.*



*Edited by*

*William Winter.*

Hammett





# The Prompt-Book.

*Edited by*

*William Winter.*



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&c. &c.

*As presented by*

*Edwin Booth.*



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The Prompt-Book.

Edited by William Winter.

(Marie)  
Louis & Victor Hugo's Drama

of

— Ruy Blas —

As Presented by

Edwin Booth.



"I think of her as prisoners think of liberty—as the blind dream of the light. I love her! that's all I know—I love her."

"Be brave! ascend the hill at whose high top thy fortune smiles and woos thee to embrace her."

"Make me worthy to offer her, as shield and sword—the queen, my arm; the woman, my devotion—a love most pure, most loyal. My dream is realized, my joy complete—I have no more to fear."

"He struck me on the heart. He saw me weep and smiled; he heard me pray, and sneered. . . . Thy lacquey triumphs. In me behold thy executioner."

"You forgive, you love me! 'T is all I lived for, and is worth dying for. Thy secret's safe. Adieu."



New-York:

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## Preface.



*THIS drama, though not, perhaps, impressive in the reading, has been found effective in the representation. The present version of it is a free translation,—by an unknown hand,—considerably altered from the original, and furnished with Edwin Booth's stage directions. The French piece, by Victor Hugo, is in five acts, and it incorporates into the action the character of Don Cæsar de Bazan, the cousin, and the victim, of Don Salluste. By excising that part, by giving some slight prominence to the part of Gudiel, and by a few transpositions and textual changes, the piece is made to tell its story in three acts, as fully as it would otherwise do in five. The original is in verse. An English translation of it, also in verse,—but in four acts,—was produced at the Princess's Theatre, London, on October 27th, 1860, under the auspices of Charles Fechter, who personated Ruy Blas; and this, in an adapted form, has been made known on the American stage. The period of Ruy Blas is the end of the 17th century—1692. The monarch referred to in its text—Charles II., of Spain—reigned over that country from 1661 to 1700, and was involved in several wars with Louis XIV., of France, whose policy and force alike aimed at securing the succession of the Spanish crown to the House of Bourbon.*

Hammett





*"There is a garden in her face,  
Where roses and white lilies blow."*—OLD SONG.

---

*"A youth to fortune and to fame unknown."*—GRAY.

---

*"I thought of tales that by the winter hearth  
Old gossips tell—how maidens sprung from kings  
Have stooped from their high sphere: how love, like death,  
Levels all ranks, and lays the shepherd's crook  
Beside the sceptre."*—BULWER.

---

*"I will be  
The sun o' thy life, faithful through every season;  
And thou shalt be my flower perennial,  
My bud of beauty, my imperial rose,  
My passion-flower; and I will wear thee here,  
Here on my heart, and thou shalt never fade!  
I'll love thee mightily, my queen."*—BARRY CORNWALL.

---

*"If thou didst ever anything believe,  
Believe how I love thee, believe how near  
My soul is to its doom."*—KEATS.

---

*"She loves, and she confesses too;  
There's then at last no more to do."*—COWLEY.

---

*"What can it matter, Margaret,  
What songs below the waning stars  
The lion-heart Plantagenet  
Sang, looking through his prison-bars?  
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell  
The last wild thought of Chatelet,  
Just ere the falling axe did part  
The burning brain from the true heart,  
Even in her sight he loved so well?"*—TENNYSON.

---

*"The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit.  
The rest is silence."*—SHAKESPEARE.

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## Persons Represented.



DON SALLUSTE, *Marquis of Finlas, Prime Minister.*

DON BASTO.

DON PEDRO.

DON MANUEL.

DON PRIEGO.

COUNT OF ALBA.

COUNT OF CAMPOREAL.

} *Grandeess of Spain.*

GUDIEL, *Secretary to Don Salluste.*

RUY BLAS.

MARIANNE OF NEUBORG, *called Queen of Spain.*

DONNA CASILDA, *Maid of Honour to the Queen.*

DUCHESS OF ALBUQUERQUE, *Duenna to the Queen.*

LORDS, LADIES, PAGES, and other ATTENDANTS.

## Place and Time.



SCENE.—*Madrid, in Spain.*

PERIOD.—*The Seventeenth Century [1692].*

TIME OF ACTION.—*There is a lapse of six months between the First and Second Acts, and of one day between the Second and Third. The action is supposed to occupy but a few hours.*





# RUY BLAS.



## Act First.

**Scene.** { MADRID. A HALL IN THE ROYAL PALACE.  
DOORS R. AND L. U. E. ARCH WITH CUR-  
TAINS, C. LARGE CHAIR, R. TABLE, WITH  
WRITING MATERIALS, L.

[*Enter Don Salluste and Gudiel, L. U. E. Don Salluste gives his hat, cloak, and sword to Gudiel, who, during Don Salluste's first speech, places them on chair, R.*

*Sal.*

Close the door, Gudiel. The day has come, but my night begins; my reign is over. The lazy household sleeps—although the sun is up, and wakes the day to witness my disgrace.

*Gud.*

Disgrace! my lord!

*Sal.*

Yes, Gudiel; my reign is ended.

*Gud.*

My lord!



*Sal.*

Yes, ended ; degraded, exiled—in a day ! My towering fortunes lie in ruins at my feet.

*Gud.*

May I ask the cause ?

*Sal.*

'Sdeath ! I'm ashamed to tell it. But listen—and be secret. A love affair—ha ! ha ! A girl of some slight beauty, but no birth—a follower of the queen's, as she is called,—though she's no queen as yet ; she is but betrothed, and wears the ring without the rights of marriage. Well, I cast my eyes upon this girl—this silly chit—about a year ago. This creature, Gudiel, rushes to the queen, dragging her brat into the royal chamber, and weeps, and wails, and howls—plebeian fool ! The queen, sir, sends for me and says, forsooth, the wench being of her suite, I must espouse her ! Do you hear !—espouse ! I refused, flatly : for the which—I'm banished ! You hear—banished. Twenty years of labour, night and day, my office, power, presidency of the high court of Alcades, revenues, patronage, influence and trust, all ! which yesterday seemed within my grasp ; all that I possessed, and all that felt assured of winning—all these have crumbled into dust, amid the jeers and laughter of the court !

*Gud.*

'T is not yet known !

*Sal.*

It will be known before the night again descends. But let us go. I will not hear the mocking of the crowd. With pride untamed, and crest erect, I will not stay to fall, but vanish ere—O, I choke with rage ! I'll be revenged.—I'll lay a mine shall scatter all my foes.

*Gud.*

Our new queen hath struck this blow ?

—

*Sal.*

The queen! She is not, and never shall be queen. By proxy married to the king. He, an animal that loves the chase—and has a vulgar liason to boot—has again postponed the actual marriage.

*Gud.*

The people wonder at this strange delay.

*Sal.*

This delay will serve my turn. Although to me hateful, she 'd fain do right, and has a loving, noble nature. She 'd be a good wife to this brutish thing we honour as a king—but she 's a woman—neglected, slighted,—feels it,—and will, when tempted, fall: at least, I 'll set the snare and place it in her path. [*Sits at table, L.*]

Who can be trusted to remain here, in your stead? I shall need you near me.

*Gud.*

The orphan son of an old and valued friend. A youth, discreet and brave I think; subdued by some strange sorrow; he came to me, in rags, some three months since, and, death depriving you of Sautalon, I gave the vacancy to Ruy Blas.

*Sal.*

'T is well. I am satisfied. Your judgment, my trusty Gudiel, never errs. Where is he?

*Gud.*

My lord, he attends for what directions you may deem needful.

*Sal.*

[*Music.*

He may enter.

*Gud.*

[*Goes to door and calls.*

Ruy! Ruy Blas!

[*Enter Ruy. Exit Gudiel.*



*Ruy.*

My lord.

*[Don Salluste, at table, carelessly looks up—then starts. Music ceases.]*

*Sal.*

*[Aside.*

Great heaven! What fatality is this? The very self of my spendthrift cousin, Cæsar! Can he be moulded to my will, and made the instrument? Young, inexperienced, doubtless romantic; time wanes; I must be quick, though cautious. *[Aloud.*

Ruy Blas!

*Ruy.*

My lord!

*Sal.*

Were you ever until now in service?

*Ruy.*

Never, my lord, before I entered yours.

*Sal.*

You will find me a good master, if you serve me well. I have but one lesson to give you. While with me, you must have neither ears, eyes, nor thought, except at my will; you must have but one quality—obedience.

*Ruy.*

I 'll do my best, my lord.

*Sal.*

Has any one in Madrid yet seen you in that garb?

*Ruy.*

Save Gudiel, none, my lord.





*Sal.*

'Tis well. During my absence you will hold his position here; if I find you competent and faithful, above all discreet, you shall retain it. Call him hither. [*Music.*]

*Ruy.*

Gudiel!

[*Enter Gudiel* L. U. E.  
*From Ruy's entrance until this point Don Salluste remains seated, closely examining Ruy, but with apparent indifference—looking over papers, etc.*

*Sal.*

He may retire.

[*To Gudiel.*  
*Music ceases.*  
*Exit Ruy, at sign from Gudiel,* L. U. E.

Gudiel, I like that youth. You know him well; is he ambitious?

*Gud.*

My lord, I have not questioned him, nor sought his confidence; from his boyhood, until three months since we have been strangers. Can he be of use to you?

*Sal.*

Great use; if he is ambitious, brave, and wise.—Hold conference with him here; I will withdraw, and judge by what I hear how capable he may be to aid me in the work I have in hand; on which, perhaps, the fate of Spain depends. So probe him well; find the main-spring of his heart's desire; and if I find him what his appearance indicates, honour and fortune shall be his.

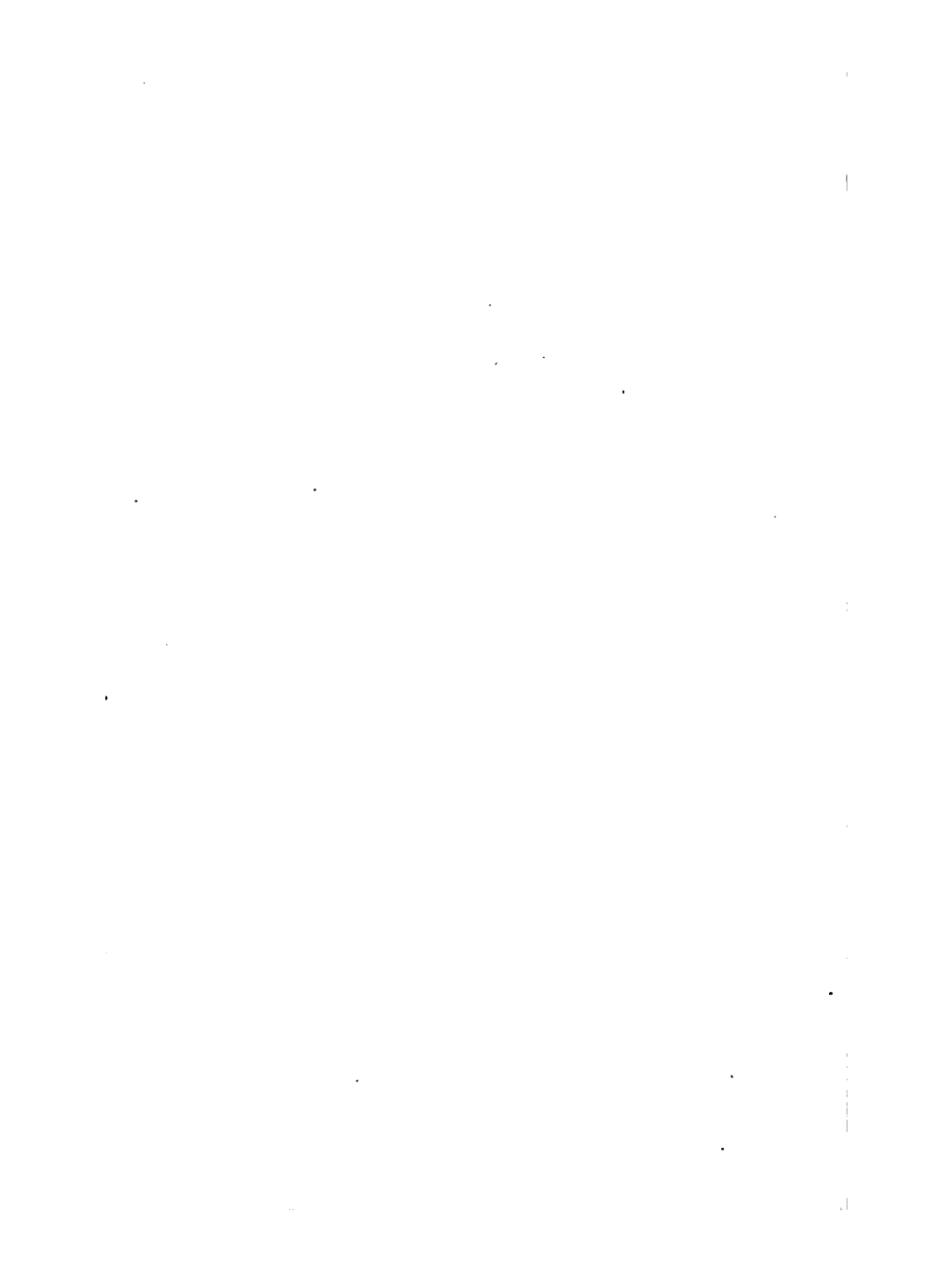
*Gud.*

My lord, you shall be satisfied.

[*Don Salluste retires. Gudiel goes to door* L. U. E.,  
*and calls:*

Ruy! Come hither.

[*Enter Ruy* L. U. E.  
Young friend, ere I depart for Finlas with our master, perhaps to be absent months, I 'd fain learn something



of you—your hopes and griefs—for tho' but yet a boy, the sadness of your countenance tells of a canker at the heart, to which youth should be a stranger.

*[Don Salluste watches this scene from behind curtains, showing himself but twice: once, at "Couldst thou see within,"—then, at "I—I madly love the queen."]*

*Ruy.*

O, Gudiel! I have longed to speak, to open my heart to some true, sympathizing friend, who would not sneer at my despair; for despair it was that drove me to your door, a beggar for a menial post, at which my heart revolts, that I might be near the delicious poisoned fount from which my soul drinks madness.

*Gud.*

What is it ails thee, boy?

*Ruy.*

Dare I speak? Yes. For in your eyes I see compassion—pity; 't is all that I can hope for, and in your heart I feel it is not coupled with contempt. Beneath this sully and dishonouring garb my soul chafes madly for relief; and, pride and manhood crushed, like a peevish child, I must give vent in words to this pent-up agony, or else my heart will break. An orphan, reared by charity, taught science and the pride that springs from knowledge, instead of a mechanic I am a dreamer. Filled with ambitious pride, I toiled and toiled—to what end? I dreamed I marched to honours! I had hope in fate, and thought the future would repay the past. I built myself an edifice of thoughts, ideas, chimeras, madness! I pitied Spain, and fancied I was born to rescue her. Poor fool! I thought the world had need of me; lo! the result you see—I am a lacquey.

*Gud.*

Poor youth! Hunger is indeed a tyrant; and when by necessity we are compelled to bow before him the grand-



est imagination stoops the lowest and suffers most. But fortune hath its ebb and flow ; our master likes you, is disposed to favour you ; deserve his confidence ; he will advance you, perhaps, to the very point at which your wildest fancy aims. Hope yet.

*Ruy.*

No, no ; it is impossible ! Within my breast a serpent, with breath of flame, winds round and round my heart its coils of burning venom. Ah, couldst thou see within !

*[Don Salluste appears at back, for an instant.]*

*Gud.*

I cannot understand.

*Ruy.*

Suppose, invent, imagine, dream ! Rack thy brains and search for something wild, incalculable, mad ; a dazzling fatality ; a passion that, like delicious poison, draws my soul towards an abyss where crime and ruin wait ; thou canst not guess,—who could ? Gudiel, into the gulf towards which my dread fate drags me, plunge thine eyes. I madly love the queen !

*[Don Salluste appears for an instant, at back.]*

*Gud.*

Great heaven !

*Sal. [Aside, and withdrawing.]*

He 's mine !

*Gud.*

The queen !

*Ruy.*

Yes ! Despise me if you will, I love her with heart of flame, with veins of fire ! So helpless, beautiful, and young ! So wretched 'mid the vile intrigues of this polluted court ! O, I would give the jewel of my mind to be but one of



those young cavaliers who are permitted to approach the queen, with plumes upon their bonnets and pride upon their brows—those living libels on humanity! But to be thus before her in livery—a—lacquey! Ah, pity me, my friend! Pity me, O heaven!

*Gud.*

I do, my son; but tell me, how grew this fatal passion, and since when?

*Ruy.*

I do not know. The madman cannot date the birth of his insanity. I think of her as prisoners think of liberty; as the blind dream of the light. I love her, that's all I know—I love her.

*Gud.*

Stifle this hopeless passion.

*Ruy.*

'T will die the day she weds the king. Like one condemned to death on a fixed day, who, yet, with pulse of health full within his heart, enjoys the sense of life, so my love is doomed, must perish or destroy me, when she weds; but till then it is privileged to live, to enjoy ecstatic dreams.

*Gud.*

Has she e'er seen thee?

*Ruy.*

No! Pardon me—you asked me, did you not, how and when this passion first had being? A month before I learned that thou wert here—when all seemed hopeless, and life had grown a torture more than I could bear—I resolved on self-destruction. Hastening through the forest with this intent I passed the convent of Rosara, as she came forth from her devotions. My soul seemed hell! when suddenly her beauteous face, like some sad angel's,





lighted all within, rekindled hope, and bade me live for her—her slave! Unknown,—unseen,—yet still to live, if but to breathe the air she breathes. To do her service, haply, and be repaid by death in doing it. You see, my friend, I'm mad—yes, mad!

*Gud.*

Since you came hither?

*Ruy.*

I've been debarred the joy of seeing her. The only recompense I hoped for now seems further from my reach than ever. My only solace is to seek in the woods a rare blue flower 't is said she loves; a flower of Germany—her native land. I go each day to gather them, and when midnight falls I, like a thief, climb o'er her garden wall and place them near a bank, on which—I learned from one of her young pages—she oft reclines to read. Last night I placed a letter 'mid the flowers—but why should I recite these follies? I know some night I may be speared or shot by the palace guards; but what care I? I shall die near her—the sweetest, holiest death for Ruy Blas! But go, my friend, and leave the miserable wretch who dares to hide beneath a lacquey's garb the passions of a king.

*[Ruy falls in chair, L. A noise is heard at back.]*

*Gud.*

Hark! Don Salluste comes—recover yourself.

*[Don Salluste enters hurriedly, not noting Ruy Blas, who rises quickly and stands L.]*

*Gud.*

My lord.

*Sal.*

Gudiel, a word with you.  
Set forth at once—depart.  
The very man I want.

*[Whispers.  
Exit Gudiel.  
Aside.]*



Ha! ha!

[*Aloud.*

How lightly beats my heart to-day! Ruy Blas, I need your aid immediately; you shall be my secretary—doff that livery—off with it at once, and take your station at the table.

[*Ruy Blas takes seat at table and writes as directed.*

Ruy, I am in love with a little angel, fresh from Paradise. Think you I am too stern and grim in look to have a tender heart? Ha! ha! Love! the rascal, hath hit even me—Salluste. I am about to dictate a billet-doux. I have full faith in you and your discretion—write!

[*Music, low and sad.*

“My queen! My heart’s queen! A doom of danger hangs o’er my head—thou canst avert the blow, and only thou. Come to me instantly—without thee I am lost. My safety—fate—my life is in thy hands. O, come to me, all powerful; I kiss thy hands and wait thee.”

To touch the heart of woman it is best to swear there is danger hovering o’er you.

“A private door that leads from the garden is open—’t will admit thee unobserved.”

[*Music ceases.*

Hast done?

*Ruy.*

Your signature?

*Sal.*

No—sign it “Cæsar!” ’T is the name she calls me.

*Ruy.*

Will not the hand betray it?

*Sal.*

I’ll put my seal on’t.

*Ruy.*

Shall I address the letter?



*Sal.*

No. I'll do that. So give it me! [*Takes letter.*

Ruy, I find you trustworthy, discreet, and faithful; I would mark my recognition of it. I'd help to lift you to a better fate—one worthier of you. Trust me, you shall rise! Now, write again. [*Same music.*

"I, Ruy Blas, servant to the Marquis of Finlas, here engage, on all occasions, public or private, to render to my master and my lord the humble service of a faithful lacquey!" [*Music ceases.*

So, sign it,—now the date—good!—give it me.

[*Takes letter.*

'Tis near the hour when the queen should pass yon gallery, on her way to the royal chapel. You shall see her gracious majesty, Ruy Blas: but first, hand me my sword.

[*Ruy gets sword from chair, &c.*

'T is handsome, is it not? The hilt's of gold, and set with precious stones. Put it on—nay, put it on; I'd see the effect: why, I vow! you have the air of a true cavalier—a lord of noble birth and breeding. You, perhaps, may wear a sword some day. [*Voices heard.*

They come.

[*Two pages draw back the curtain from arch. Don Pedro, Don Basto, Don Manuel, Don Priego, and Courtiers are discovered, in conversation, in the chamber. As they come forward, Don Saluste quickly takes his cloak from chair and envelopes Ruy before the lords observe him.*

Gentlemen, permit me to present to your kindly notice, my young cousin, Cæsar de Bazan.

*All.*

Don Cæsar!

*Ruy.*

Great Heaven!

*Sal.*

Silence!

[*Aside, to Ruy.*



We thought you dead !	<i>Bas.</i>	} <i>All speak simultaneously, bowing as they speak.</i>
'Twas so reported !	<i>Prie.</i>	
We are much honoured !	<i>Man.</i>	
Sir, most welcome !	<i>Ped.</i>	
My Lord !	<i>Ruy.</i>	

[*To Sal.*

*Sal.*

Call me cousin, Cæsar! We *are* cousins, you know ; the Bazans are sufficiently frank about their origin and relatives. You are of Arragon—I of Portugal ; your branch is not less high than mine ; I am the fruit of one, you the flower of the other.

[*Enter Alba.*

*Alba.*

Ahem! What 's this—what 's this! of fruits and flowers—what—what? I beg to inform you, Don Saluste, that I, as Marquis de Santa Cruz, am the recognized representative of our house, the head, the stem, the fruit, the flower—yea, the very tree, root, branch and sap of the stock Bazan. I can allow no error to creep abroad ; I—I——

*Sal.*

My dear Marquis, no one dare dispute your rights ; I was but presenting to these gentlemen our cousin, Cæsar, who has suddenly returned.

*Alba.*

What, from the other world !

[*All laugh.*





*Sal.*

No, from the Indies.

*Alba.*

Let me see. Yes, yes, indeed; I recognize him. How like his mother! Your hand, my cousin.

*Sal.*

You recognize him?

*Alba.*

I should think so! I was one of the witnesses to his birth.

[*All laugh.*

I should not have known him.

[*Aside.*

*Sal.*

Ten years abroad——

*Ruy.*

My lord!

*Sal.*

[*Aside to Ruy.*

When your fortune rises does your spirit sink? Be blind, be dumb, be wise! Trust all to me.

[*Aloud.*

Yes, here is the spendthrift. His rich inheritance—you remember it, Marquis—scattered to the winds. In three years, ruined; but he had the heart of a lion, and set to work to retrieve his fortunes, and lo! here he is, fresh from India, with a galleon filled with treasure!

[*All bow and exclaim at once.*

*All.*

Sir!

*Alba.*

I had a great regard for your mother, sir!

[*Shaking hands with Ruy.*

Gods! How like his mother!

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*Sal.*

As I am now in disgrace and shall be absent from Madrid, may I ask your interest, gentlemen, in his behalf?

*All.*

Assuredly—My voice is his—Decidedly.

*[March pp.—After their assurances to Ruy, all the lords put on their hats and turn towards back of scene.]*

*Ruy.*

*[To Don Salluste.]*

To what will this lead?

*Sal.*

Ruy, be fearless; walk blindfold on; my eyes shall see for thee, my hand direct. Be brave! Ascend the hill at whose high top thy fortune smiles, and woos thee to embrace her.

*Voice.*

*[Music, louder.  
[Outside.]*

The queen!

*Ruy.*

My lord!

*Sal.*

*[Forcing his hat into Ruy's hand.]*

Put it on; put it on. Use your right.

*[Ruy mechanically puts on hat.]*

A grandee of Spain stands covered in the presence of the queen.

*All.*

The queen!

*[The Queen enters, above, preceded and followed by Lords and Ladies. Picture.]*

CURTAIN.

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## Act Second.

**Scene First.** { MADRID. ANOTHER HALL IN THE ROYAL PALACE. LARGE BOW-WINDOW R.C.: SEVERAL LADIES SEATED NEAR IT. QUEEN DISCOVERED AT TABLE R. DUCHESS OF ALBUQUERQUE IN LARGE CHAIR, L., READING. CASILDA SITTING AT FEET OF THE QUEEN.

*Queen.*

[*In soliloquy.*

I cannot chase the image from my thoughts. I dream of him by night; I think of him by day. I see him, grave and joyless, as he bent o'er my hand, and took his leave. Don Salluste hates me. Yes, his proud eye tells it; and I fear him. His smile of state but cloaks revenge,—a poisoned dagger sheathed in courtesy. [*She rises.*

*Duch.*

Ladies!

[*Rising.*

Ladies, the queen has risen.

[*They all rise, languidly, and sit when the Queen motions to them to do so.*

*Queen.*

[*Still in soliloquy.*

He is gone, and I should be at ease. Still, I have a presentiment of ill. He is my evil genius! I fancy the demon lurks around the little paradise of my lone musings. The flowers, the letter, the symbols of some unknown heart's devotion—ah, should his malice pierce that mystery, the solace of my wretched life were lost, destroyed, defiled!

[*To Casilda.*

Casilda, do my poor pensioners attend?



*Cas.*

Madam, they do, beneath the balcony.

*Duch.*

*[Each time the Duchess speaks, she rises, and at conclusion of her remarks sits, very stiff and stately.]*

Pardon, your majesty. The etiquette of this great court of Spain does not permit the queen to show herself unto the people, save on state occasions.

*Queen.*

Very well! Throw them my purse, Casilda. Let us play some game to pass away the tedious time.

*Duch.*

Pardon, your majesty. Etiquette forbids! The queen may not amuse herself, excepting with her equals, kings or queens, or princes and princesses of the blood royal of the kingdom.

*Queen.*

*[Irritated.]*

But none are here!

*Duch.*

His majesty, alas! has no relations.

*[Curtseys.]*

*Queen.*

Casilda, Isabella, let us walk.

*Duch.*

Pardon, your majesty! Etiquette of this great court of Spain exacts that when the queen doth condescend to walk each door is opened by a grandee, who holds the key. Not one grandee is in the palace now; therefore, your majesty must please remain.





Am I a prisoner ?

*Queen.*

*Duch.*

Pardon ; as mistress of the royal household, as duenna to the queen of Spain, until the festal day that dawns upon the marriage I fulfill my duty.

*Queen.*

Casilda, you pity me, do you not ?

*Cas.*

Your majesty——

*Queen.*

No matter. Bring fruit and wine. Ladies, I invite you.

*Duch.*

Pardon, your majesty ! Etiquette compels the queen of Spain, unless the king is by, to eat alone.

*Queen.*

The king ! The king neglects me, even before we 're wed. I never see him ! He 's always at the chase. For the six months I 've been in Spain, I 've not seen him six times.

*Cas.*

[*Aside.*

Poor lady ! In this dreary court, condemned to pass her days so drearily ; hemmed in by etiquette and stupid forms !

Madam !

[*To Queen, who is in a reverie.*

*Queen.*

Casilda !

*Cas.*

You seem sad.



*Queen.*

Sad ! E'en captives are allowed that liberty.

*Cas.*

[*Whispering.*

The secret door I told you of frees you to pass at pleasure.

*Queen.*

True ; I'd forgotten. I was thinking then of my dear home in Germany—my sister ; and how we played together 'neath the trees ; and laughed and sang ; until one sad, sad day, a man in black came up to me, and said : " You are betrothed to the king of Spain ! " My father triumphed and my mother wept. I think, in private, both were sorry for it. I came here, to learn the duties of a queen, ere I become the wife unto a king. 'T is a dull place, your court : the little birds I brought from home all died since they 've been here. I am a prisoner ; bound down by forms ; for me the sun smiles not upon the flowers ; for me the clouds find not a mirror in the stream. Nature is lost to me !

*Cas.*

Madam, look from this casement. 'T is a lovely view ; the woods, the river—see.

[*Queen is going towards casement.*

*Duch.*

Pardon, your majesty ! Etiquette permits not the queen of Spain to look out of a casement, opened or shut.

*Queen.*

Am I forbidden, then, to gaze upon the liberty of others ?

[*Aside.*

No pastime but the dangerous one of weaving a romance about the unknown being whose voiceless worship is symbolized by my best loved flowers ! Ah, heaven shield me from that temptation !

[*Enter two pages, L. 2. E., ushering in Alba.*



*Page.*

Count Alba. From the king.

[*Exeunt pages. Alba produces letter.*]

*Queen.*

Heaven has heard my prayer! A letter of affectionate remembrance, to recall me to my sense of duty—gratitude. Give it me quickly. [*Duchess quickly interposes.*]

*Duch.*

Whence comes the letter?

*Alba.*

From Aranguez, madam, where the king is hunting.

*Queen.*

I thank his grace. He has had compassion on my ennui, and doubtless sends me a letter full of pleasant tidings. Give it me.

*Duch.*

[*Takes letter.*]

Pardon, your majesty! The etiquette of this great court of Spain demands that I, as mistress of the royal household, in absence of the king, should first open and read all letters addressed to the queen of Spain.

[*Alba goes up to ladies at window.*]

*Queen.*

Again—Ah, well! read it.

*Duch.*

[*Slowly, after putting on spectacles.*]

“Madam. There’s a high wind. I have killed six wolves.

(Signed)

“CARLOS.”



Is that all? *Queen.*

Yes, your majesty, all! *Duch.*

Alas! *Queen.*

*Cas.* [ *Aside.*

He has "killed six wolves!" What an agreeable piece of information to forward to his betrothed bride—her gentle heart longing for some kind word! "Killed six wolves!" I wish the rest of the pack may revenge their brethren, and kill him! "It blows a high wind." I hope it may blow him off his horse!

*Duch.* [ *Offering letter.*  
Does your majesty wish to read this victorious record of his majesty's exploits?

No. *Queen.*

Is that really all? *Cas.* [ *Aside to Duchess.*

*Duch.*  
All. And a great deal, too! Should there be more? The king was hunting; he paused to write the number he had killed, and the state of the weather. It is a very important and royal letter indeed, and should be enrolled in the archives of the state. [ *Examining letter.*

Stay! His majesty did not write this. He but dictated.

*Queen.* [ *Taking letter.*  
No, 't is not his hand; the signature alone is his.

[ *Looking more curiously at letter, and aside.*  
Ah, is this some illusion? This writing is the same as that of the letter received with the flowers. What can this mean? Do they come then from a courtier? [ *To Alba.*

Know you who it was that wrote this letter at the king's dictation?





The Duke Olmedo. *Alba.*

Duke Olmedo ? *Queen.*

The first minister. *Duch.*

Who galloped hither, and now waits for me in the council chamber. *Alba.*

*Queen.*

Duke Olmedo ! [*Queen sits at table, R., with letter.*

*Duch.*

A scion of the great house of Bazan ; a perfect and accomplished cavalier, his noble birth bursting through every look.

*Cas.*

[*To one of the ladies, overheard by Alba.*

The handsomest young gallant of them all. I loved him at first sight, although, alas, I've not changed word with him ; but I've a plan to send to-night to him by old Paquita. I die with curiosity to hear how he makes love.

[*Alba comes down, L., in rage.*

*Alba.*

[*Aside.*

Indeed. She loves him, then ! and he is my twenty-third successful rival. I'll pick a quarrel with, and kill him. Yes, Olmedo's dead.

Your majesty, may it please you I retire ? [*To Queen.*

[*She bows. He crosses, while the Queen and Duchess speak.*

*Queen.*

The duke Olmedo.

*Duch.*

Don Cæsar de Bazan, duke of Olmedo.



*Alba.*

Don Cæsar de Bazan, duke of——dead. [Exit.

[Casilda speaks aside, to ladies, at Alba's exit.

*Cas.*

The old count is jealous—furious. I must get him out of the way—even if I'm obliged to kiss him—or a duel may ensue.

*Queen.*

Is council held to-day?

*Duch.*

Madam, it is.

[March pp.

*Cas.*

See! The duke is passing through the court-yard, going to the council chamber.

[All the ladies crowd to window.

*Queen.* [Going toward window.

Ah, I would see him. [Ladies fall back from window.

*Duch.*

Pardon, your majesty; but the etiquette of this great court of Spain forbids——

*Queen.*

[Aside.

Etiquette? O, how gladly would I exchange your imperceptible fetters for the iron chains that weigh down the malefactor!

[To Duchess.

Who is the duke of Olmedo? His title is a new one to me.

*Duch.*

A young nobleman of the house of Bazan, recommended to the king, and to me, by the Marquis de Santa Cruz. He is a most accomplished gentleman, of rare talent for government.



*Queen.*

You mean, I suppose, for intrigue.

*Duch.*

No, your majesty. He is distinguished by high bearing and a great regard for decorum and etiquette. Since I have been in office I have had the aid of his authority in re-establishing all those ancient forms and strict rules about egress and ingress to and from the palace which prevent all chance of easy approach to the person of your majesty.

*Queen.*

So, then, I have to thank him for all these restrictions which have, of late, made life a burden to me.

*Duch.*

Which tend to elevate and make more sacred the majesty of the queen of Spain.

*Queen.*

[*Aside.*

I see the snare. Ah, is 't possible that a noble—that a man could lend himself to further a plot against a woman, by such a vile system of petty torture?

[*Aloud.*

I cannot believe it.

*Duch.*

Your pardon. As the officers and servants of the court had fallen into habits of neglect in these matters, and were difficult to reclaim, to enforce my directions, here is an order of state commanding their observance; written and signed by the duke, with an abstract of the various rules to be revived, and the watches to be kept by the guards and pages.

*Queen.*

[*Aside, taking paper.*

'T is the same hand. Ah, base——

[*To Duchess.*

Will you permit me to retain for a short time this



precious document, and leave me to peruse it at leisure, that I may obtain some knowledge of what I am free to do, and what 's forbidden ?

*Duch.*

Willingly, your majesty. A queen of Spain should be perfect mistress of court etiquette, and cannot be better employed than in its study. You will find it very edifying and interesting reading, I am sure. Ladies, it is the festival of Kunegunda, the patroness of decorum. Let us go and make an obeisance at her shrine, in the royal chapel, and I shall afterwards entertain you by reading her life.

*Cas.*

*[Aside.*

In twenty-six chapters—what a treat! I should fall asleep.

*[The Duchess makes a very stately curtsey, which all the ladies mimic—hardly restraining their laughter. Exeunt L. 2. E. Duchess, and all the ladies except Casilda, who, when Duchess has turned away, runs to Queen, kneels, and kisses her hand.*

But now to pacify Count Alba.

*Exit Casilda.*

*Queen.*

*[Takes letter from her breast and compares it with paper.*

The same—the same. O, infamy!

*[Dashes letter on table.*

Ah, heaven, thou hast punished me for cherishing in my heart the vain dream of being loved! These flowers, this letter, these restrictions—all were portions of the same plot to humble me. Annoyance—torture on the one hand, temptation on the other. Did he not say he was of the house of Bazan—a relative, no doubt, of Don Salluste; in league with him; perhaps his instrument. But I shall defeat, nay, triumph over both. I shall meet this plotting—





this base courtier duke, and in full council denounce his treason; cast his flowers and his letter at his feet, and rend his order too—nay, more, attach him as a traitor to his sovereign! For once, the queen of Spain, so called, shall play, indeed, the queen, and vindicate the outraged woman too. The means, thank heaven, I have at hand. Casilda showed me a passage leading from this apartment to a secret cabinet within the council chamber,—made by Philip II., that he might overhear, while concealed in it, his ministers debate: a mean design, but it will serve me now to reach the council in despite the duke's high mandate. Quick—the letter—order—and the flowers.

[*Looks at flowers.*]

Of what sweet thoughts were they the types to me; so delicate and pure I deemed the mystic love they came to represent! and was it all a dream, sad heart—a dream? Base cunning; that outrages the holiest symbols of true love,—and calls for quick and bitter vengeance!

[*Exit L. 2. E.*]

**Scene Second.**

COUNCIL CHAMBER IN THE ROYAL PALACE. ARCH, WITH STEPS AND PLATFORM C. LARGE TABLE ON WHICH ARE PAPERS, BOOKS, PENS, INK, ETC., ETC., L. SEVERAL LARGE CHAIRS AROUND IT. SMALLER TABLE, ALSO FURNISHED WITH WRITING MATERIALS, R. CHAIRS R. LARGE WINDOW R. 2. E. SECRET PANEL L. DON MANUEL, CAMPOREAL, DON BASTO, DON PRIEGO, DON PEDRO, AND OTHER NOBLEMEN DISCOVERED, SEATED, OR LOUNGING ABOUT THE ROOM.

*Man.*

His sudden rise is most mysterious.



*Camp.*

The order of the Golden Fleece; the office of state secretary; minister of finance—prime minister; and now made duke of Olmedo.

*Man.*

All in six months.

*Camp.*

A powerful influence supports and forwards all his wishes.

*Man.*

[ *Cautiously.*

Yes, the queen.

*Camp.*

Nay, although, neglected by her husband, she might be well tempted to cast her eye upon our chivalrous minister, they never meet. My suspicions at first took the course that yours did; but I have watched well, and can find no trace or symptom of communication between them. I do not think she has ever seen him. He lives, when out of the council chamber, a secluded life, in the palace that formerly belonged to his cousin, Don Salluste; attended only by a couple of dumb servants. He receives no visitors.

*Man.*

All this is very singular and suspicious.

[ *Enter Alba c.*

*Bas.*

Don Cæsar is a man of great ambition and surpassing genius.

*Alba.*

[ *Advancing.*

He's clever; but, gentlemen, he owes a great deal to my influence. I it was who recommended him to the king; I it was who guided his policy by my advice, and to me he owes nearly every advance of position he has obtained; and you are all wrong in supposing that he is indebted to any other influence than mine. I made his fortune.

[ *Goes up.*



▲



*Camp.* [ *Aside to others.*

True, and I rather think he regrets it now ; for Olmedo shows him no favour in return ; but the patronage of the old Duchess Alberquerque, the mistress of the household, makes the duke independent. I have heard, from those who knew him formerly, that Don Cæsar, to-day our master, was then one of the greatest fools under the moon—a spendthrift, who dissipated his whole patrimony in a few years.

*Man.*

A youth of folly sometimes makes an age of wisdom.

*Bas.*

I believe him to be a man of honour and probity.

*Camp.*

O, credulous Basto ! who takes seeming for reality : The private purse of which he has the command annually absorbs six hundred and sixty million ducats. 'T is an obscure little Pactolus reserved for a particular fisherman, but in which I should like to cast a net.

*Prie.*

You are not wise. Your present talk is, at least, very imprudent. My late grandfather—an experienced courtier—always gave this advice :—“ bite the king but kiss the favourite.”

*Alba.*

[ *At table.*

Gentlemen, gentlemen, let us turn our attention to public affairs.

*Camp.*

[ *Aside.*

His private interest he means—his avarice has some new greed.

[ *All seat themselves at table.*

*Ped.* [ *To Basto, in a low tone.*

I want you to make my nephew an alcade or custodian of the waifs and strays.



*Bas.*

You promised me to name, ere long, my cousin Mel-  
choir bailie of the Ebro.

*Ped.*

You will ask me to dower your daughter next—one is  
perpetually assailed.

*Bas.*

You shall have your alcade.

*Ped.*

And you your bailie.

*Alba.*

Gentlemen of the council, I must call your attention to  
the fact that all are well provided for, except myself.  
You have charge of the revenues upon tobacco, Basto.  
Those upon indigo and musk are yours, my lord marquis  
de Priego—nice picking for you both. Camporeal  
receives the imposts upon salt, amber, jet, ivory, and other  
profitable things. Manuel, why regard me with an  
unquiet eye? You are well off, I am sure; getting as you  
do, the duties upon arsenic, ice, lead, and rosewood, and  
the fines paid by the citizen defaulters for the remission of  
corporeal punishment. A vast sum—but I have nothing  
—nothing. Gentlemen give me something.

*Camp.*

[*Aside.*

O, the old cormorant! He has the cleanest profits of  
all: except the Indies—he has all the islands in both seas;  
his wide wings stretch from Majorca to Teneriffe.

*Alba.*

I repeat—I have nothing.

*Prie.*

[*Laughing.*

He has the negroes.





*Ped.*

I have much more reason to complain. I want the woods and forests.

*Alba.*

I want something—must have something. Give me the arsenic and you shall have the negroes.

*[All rise and talk at once. Ruy enters at back, observing them.]*

*Ruy.*

My lords! My lords!

*[All start.]*

O, virtuous statesmen! O, faithful senators, who took an oath to serve your country. Corrupt servants! Traitors! False stewards, who rob your master when asleep! have you no interest in your native land except to pillage, and to fly from her? O, midnight plunderers, breaking open a grave—your mother's grave—to filch her wedding ring! Gentlemen, for twenty years the wretched people, whom you still would press, groaning beneath a weight of taxes, have sweated full four hundred and some thirty million crowns of gold, to pleasure you in riot, waste, and luxury! Spain totters to destruction, and you seek the means to make her poorer, to enrich yourselves. You, Spaniards, sack your homes as would a foreign foe! Threatened by war, what army can we oppose to the invader? None. Our barefoot soldiers are transformed to robbers who plunder those they should protect. On land starvation, on our seaboard menace; abroad a war, and discontent at home. You count but what you'll gain; as wreckers, when they see a vessel storm-tossed, laugh with glee at prospect of the booty. Shame upon the parricides who, in the dark, poniard their father! O, ten thousand shames fall upon those great lords who rack their brains to plot the ruin of their native land!

*Alba.*

This to me! A Santa Cruz! The head of the house of Bazan! who placed him first in office—the ingrate. I'll be revenged.—I withdraw my support from you—I resign my office. What say you, sir, to that?



*Ruy.*

That it spares me the pain of your dismissal. You will withdraw, my lord, and in three days leave Madrid, nor return until recalled.

*Alba.*

Leave Madrid! Exile Santa Cruz! I'll challenge him—but hold, the heralds are in dispute about his coat of arms—he referred them to me. I'll send a design with the bar sinister. Ha, ha! I'll be revenged. [*Exit.*

*Ruy.*

Gentlemen, you will please retire. In two hours we will resume our labours.

[*Exit all but Ruy. Enter a Page, with letter.*

*Page.*

A letter for your excellency.

[*Gives letter to Ruy.*

*Ruy.*

The king's seal.

[*Exit Page.*

“To our trusty and well beloved cousin:—The subject of which we wished to speak, and could not call to mind this morning, was the immediate solemnization of our marriage with the queen. You will see the necessary preparations instantly made. Carlos, Rex.”

My dream has reached its climax—the crisis of my fate has come.

[*Enter another Page.*

*Page.*

Your excellency, the ambassador of France requests an interview.

*Ruy.*

I cannot see him now.

*Page.*

The nuncio of the pope awaits your excellency in the hall of audience.



*Ruy.*

At this hour, it is impossible.

*[Exit Page.*

O, that it should be my task to speed the preparations for her nuptials: my hand must turn the knife already in my heart.

*[Queen enters, through secret panel.*

*Queen.*

Noble, yet sad—as I have dreamed of him—my heart's ideal.

*Ruy.*

Great heaven—the queen!

*Queen.*

Yes, the queen; who for the first time greets the minister.

*Ruy.*

*[Aside.*

For six months I have avoided meeting her; what fate has sent her here—and at this moment too—O, misery!

*Queen.*

Yes, the queen, who came with purpose to upbraid, but in thy presence asks thy pardon.

*Ruy.*

Upbraid! Pardon!

*Queen.*

I can speak to thee without fear; thou art too noble to misunderstand me, or to pass the bound high honour puts between us.— My fate, a sad one—made harsher by restrictions attributed to thee—led me to cherish a fond dream of one unknown, who, shrouded in the mystery true passion only can endure, had sung sad music to my soul—invisible—yet living and beloved. Thou seest.

*[Shows flowers.*



*Ruy.*

My gift—its shrine her heart—O, joy ineffable!

*Queen.*

This order, in the same hand, for a moment palled all the heaven of my dream; and in the darker mirror of my soul I saw a tempting, mocking demon, where before had smiled an angel. I thought thy hidden love a snare—a plot—and each restriction but another spur to urge me onward to the toil.

*Ruy.*

O, heaven! 'T was so you judged of me!

*Queen.*

A moment only. I sought thee, to upbraid; I came to meet a mere intriguing courtier, and to confound with just reproach his cruelty and baseness; but, when I heard the noble words that, bursting from a great and mighty heart, swept down the towering pride and insolence of Spain's most haughty and rapacious foes—her lords! Nay, when I heard thy voice, and saw thy flashing eyes, that pierced, like shafts of scorn, the breasts of those base peers, I felt that I had wronged thee, and for that I come to ask thy pardon.

*Ruy.*

Ah, madam, you were there? [*Motions toward panel.*]

*Queen.*

Yes, I was there; unknown to thee, and have heard all: you forgive me?

*Ruy.*

Forgive thee—I, thy slave—thy worshipper! Ah! heaven, thou knowest how I have shunned this dread temptation; aid me to resist it.





*Queen.*

I knew not that such grandeur, both of thought and speech, existed until now. You are young, but lately raised to power, and yet you speak like one who might give laws to kings. Whence comes this woman's tenderness of heart—this manly fearlessness of foes?

*Ruy.*

It springs from love of thee. In serving Spain, I serve the queen. Thy image lends me strength! Strengthened by love, I am all-powerful! I love thee!—hear me out. Thou art another's—a king's—though not his bride, his bride elect. I know it; knowing it, have shunned thy presence, still loving while I shunned it. I have loved thee as the mariner the star that guides him home. A distant homage and an awe-struck worship! Though low to thee as is the earth from heaven, I love thee as the blind may love the light he never hopes to look on! Nay, start not; thou art to me all sacred as saint to votary; as was the muse to poet worshipper in olden times, or nymphid forms, imagined purer e'en than Dian's self, and cloistered deep in ocean's crystal caves.

*Queen.*

Dare I believe—have I the right to listen?

*Ruy.*

For six months, although consumed with longing to behold, I have shunned—avoided thee—O with what agony of self repression! but now, I dare to gaze on, worship, and avow my love to thee. I shrink back, lest my shadow should profane. What is your wish? Say to me—die—and I am dead. O, have I offended? Pity—pardon me.

*Queen.**[Aside.*

What music have mine ears drunk in? This is indeed the love that poets sing of—that, were I free to answer,



would make life a blessing, earth a paradise; and yet, though mine and living but for me, I must, as he did, shun it like a foe.

*Ruy.*

Thou dost not speak—O, heaven! I have offended past thy power to pardon.

*Queen.*

No need of pardon; when no wrong has e'er been done. May heaven have pity on us both, for both are sadly doomed! I will not wrong thy noble nature with a doubt. Thou 'lt not presume, though I confess to thee my queenly life a miserable one. I tried to give my love where duty told me 't would be one day due. It was repulsed. All sense of tenderness was frowned into a formal show of mere politeness. Surrounded but by pulseless beings, who moved and acted but as puppets do; assured affection could not live for me; my sense of life grew dull—and in the shade of cold court-etiquette, my heart seemed withering, and I longed to die.

*Ruy.*

Alas!

*Queen.*

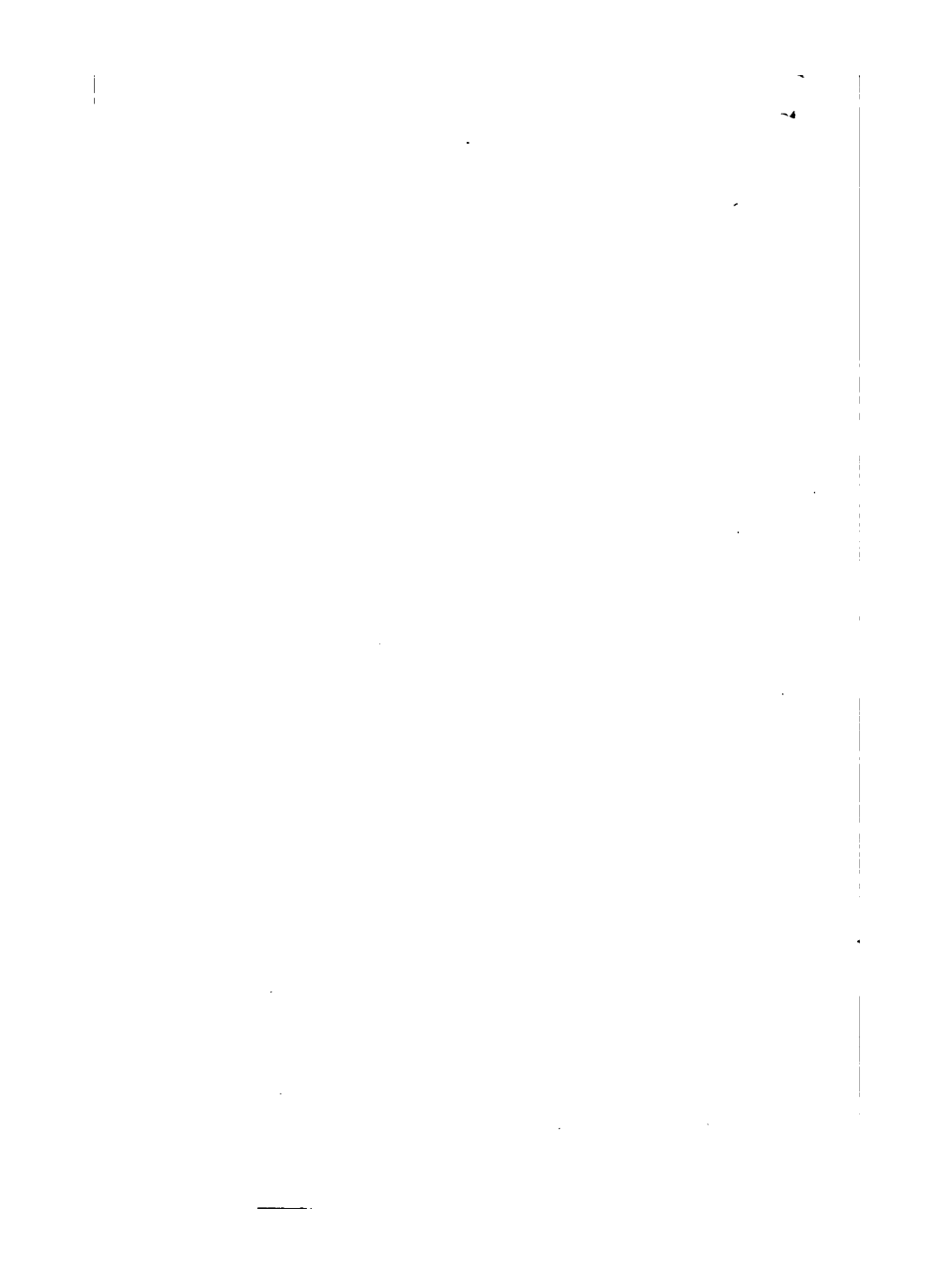
To shun despair I gave my soul to dreams; and sought for their indulgence the solitude of lonely walks. In one of these I found, while resting for a moment in the park, a bouquet of the flowers I most loved. I wondered whence they came; but when the offering was renewed I knew that some one cared to please me; and with their fragrances inhaled a sense of ecstasy—a thought that some one loved me.

*Ruy.*

O, my queen! Kill me not with sense of too much joy.

*Queen.*

I knew not whom, and scarcely wished to know. My fancy hardly sought to realize his form; my heart was



satisfied to be but loved. At last this letter came—a terror first—a treasure soon. Heaven pardon me—no doubt 't was wrong—but my poor heart so hungered for affection, I could not in my loneliness deny it the deep bliss to feel itself enthroned as queen of some pure soul. Imagination grew more bold and gave a bright ideal to my heart,—which, noble, tender, pure, as I've found thee, I do not shame to own that heart set up as idol, and enshrined.

*Ruy.*

My queen—O, spare me.

*Queen.*

Alas! What poverty of payment is this poor acknowledgment to thee, who have so suffered but to solace my sad solitude, who now must suffer more, since now we ne'er again must meet.

*Ruy.*

Never. 'T is true; the fatal hour is at hand. Well, I accept, without complaint, my destiny. In dreams you've loved me—what other solace needs my heart?

*Queen.*

This one—since you so nobly think, and can so nobly act, to know thyself for evermore the idol of my dreams. Adieu.

*[She offers her hand. He is about to take it, but, at sight of the betrothal ring upon her finger, checks himself.]*

Nay, take my hand.

*[Kneels and takes her hand.]*

*Ruy.*

My queen——

*Queen.*

We part forever. Heaven itself may smile on our farewell.



*Ruy.*

'Tis true: pure and enshrined as heaven thou art —  
farewell forever.

*Queen.*

Forever, here below, with hope to meet above.

[*Exit the Queen.*]

*Ruy.*

Can it be real? Loved, and by her! 'tis so! O!  
Paradise that opens to my eyes and steeps my soul in  
love's profound repose: loved — happy — powerful.

[*During this speech Don Salluste, dressed in livery,  
enters, and sits on table, carelessly watching Ruy.*]

Duke Olmedo; Spain at my feet! its honour in my  
hands — my country's honour! Teach me, O, heaven!  
how to be worthy of my task; make me worthy to offer  
her as shield and sword — the queen, my arm; the woman,  
my devotion. A love most pure, most loyal. My dream  
is realized — my joy complete — I have no more to fear.

*Sal.*

Good day.

*Ruy.*

Great heaven! — I'm lost — the marquis!

*Sal.*

It appears that you did n't expect me.

*Ruy.*

Your lordship has, indeed, taken me by surprise.

[*Aside.*]

My evil star again has risen. The angel gone, the  
demon comes!

*Sal.*

Well, how goes all with you?

*Ruy.*

This livery —





*Sal.*

O, it procuréd me an entrance to the palace. I find it much to my taste, and most convenient.

*Ruy.*

But, you are in danger —

*Sal.*

Danger—what an absurd idea!

*Ruy.*

As an exile, you must be.

*Sal.*

Do you think that possible?

*Ruy.*

What, if you should be recognized in the very court, and in open day?

*Sal.*

Bah! The happy gentlemen in favour at court have no remembrance of one in disgrace; their time is too precious to be wasted; besides, no one ever criticizes the profile of a lacquey. Apropos, what is this I heard talked of just now? Is it true that, influenced by some patriotic mania, you have exiled the grandee, Santa Cruz, through whose influence you first obtained office? That is very ungrateful of you; you forget he is your relation, Don Cæsar. Look at your escutcheon; you will find the quarterings are similar. He's certainly your relation. Wolf should hunt with wolf. Your eyes, ears, hands should open to him; close to all others. Every one for his own.

*Ruy.*

My lord, pardon me; but these nobles were guilty, not only of neglect in discharge of their official duties, but of



systematic plunder. The revenues of the State flowed not into the treasury, but into their pockets. A great war pending, they saw Spain without an army and still thought ——

*Sal.*

There appears to be a draught from yonder window—oblige me by closing it.

[*After a violent effort, Ruy obeys. Music meanwhile.*]

*Ruy.*

As I was saying, your excellency, the safety of Spain can only be ensured by the probity of its ministers. I had flung down the gauntlet, and sent word to the emperor that I should only answer his imperious demands, in the field, at the head of an army.

*Sal.*

Give me my handkerchief.

[*Same business and music as before.*]  
You were saying ——

*Ruy.*

The safety of Spain is in our hands. Let us save the people—let us dare to be just—let us drive selfish intrigue from our councils, and treat as criminals these lordly knaves.

*Sal.*

My good friend, let us have no more of this nonsense—this patriotic froth: your ministerial cant of virtue, probity, is a stale bait for popularity—a piece of faded tinsel, that is out of date. You are really but a child in these matters. Your globe is but a balloon which we need but pierce with a pin to make collapse; indeed, a good hearty kick would burst it, and let out all the vapourish vanity within.

*Ruy.*

My lord——



*Sal.*

I thought I should surprise you ; but let us occupy ourselves with more serious and important matters. You will wait my coming to-morrow evening in your palace—the one that I have given you. My project nears accomplishment. Take care that you have no attendants.

*Ruy.*

My lord, I shall obey. I submit to everything. Do but assure me that the object which you have in view does not affect the safety of the queen.

*Sal.*

The queen ? O—the princess de Neubourg. What makes you think of her ?

*Ruy.*

You are a strange and fearful man. I have an instinct of some dark design which makes my spirit tremble. I feel that you would compel me to commit a crime against the very religion of my heart—for I ——

*Sal.*

I know it—you love her.

*Ruy.*

You know it ?

*Sal.*

Yes ; but what does that matter ? You dream, my master, truly ; in seeking to be serious, you only play the buffoon. The goal to which I only know the way is much nearer to your happiness than you can conceive. I lead you. Be content and obey me. I have made a lord of you—'t is a singular transformation—for the moment you have all the semblance of one : but do not forget you are my valet—my lacquey. You are a courtier by mere chance ; your true place is behind my carriage. So, pray be reasonable.

*Ruy.*

O, heaven ! of what crime of mine is this the punishment ? Do not permit me to be driven to despair. Must



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I assist to torture the poor victim of another's hate—perchance the object of my own heart's love. I feel assured his object is but revenge—vengeance on the queen, and am I to aid in that? become to her an object of affright and horror? I shall go mad—my reason leaves me. O, have pity; mercy on her—on me! You know I am a faithful servant—you have confessed it, often. In humbleness I pray—implore for mercy—mercy.

*Sal.*

*[Aside.*

What a fool this fellow is! he will not comprehend.

*[To Ruy.*

Let us have an end to this, my master.

You have closed that window badly. I feel still the draught. *[Don Salluste crosses to R. and closes window.*

*Ruy.*

O, this is past endurance! I am the duke of Olmedo, prime minister—all powerful; and I will crush beneath my heel the tyrant that would tread on me.

*Sal.*

What say you? Pray repeat that speech. Ruy Blas, duke of Olmedo!—quite blind with folly! you forget that upon the count of Bazan was conferred the dukedom of Olmedo.

*Ruy.*

I will arrest you.

*Sal.*

And I denounce you.

*Ruy.*

Me?

*Sal.*

Yes. I foresaw this, and took care to put your head in equal jeopardy with mine. Ha—ha—you are too quick to play the victor, sir.

*Ruy.*

I will deny all.

*Sal.*

Denial will not serve you.





*Ruy.*

You have no proofs.

*Sal.*

Thou hast no memory—fool. Hearken sir! and know thyself as much my servant, slave, as is the glove to the hand. If thou obeyest me not, if to-morrow thou dost not have all in readiness as I've directed, at thy house, and meet me there—if thou speakest one word of what has passed between us, to a living being—if thy looks or gestures should imply betrayal, she, for whom thou hast most fear, will, as the object of thy senseless passion, be publicly defamed, disgraced, nay—lost; she shall receive under cover, a paper, which I treasure in a secure place—written—thou shouldst know by whose hand—signed—thou shouldst know with whose name—to this effect:—

*[Hurried music.]*

“I, Ruy Blas, servant to his lordship, the marquis of Finlas, do hereby engage, on every occasion, public and private, to render him the obedience of a faithful lacquey.”

*Ruy.*

Enough! I will do your bidding. *[Sinks in chair. Murmurs heard within.]*

*Sal.*

They come. *[Bowing low and hiding his face.]*  
My lord duke, command your faithful valet.

*[Lords enter c. and advance R. Music ceases.]*

*All.*

Duke Olmedo, we tender our resignations.

*Ruy.* *[Starting to his feet.]*

'T's well! You are no longer needed. Go!

*[Some depart.]*

*[To those who remain.]*

For you, if you remain, know that my hand must hold the helm and steer the vessel on a different course. You all shall feel that I am master here. *[All bow.]*

CURTAIN.



## Act Third.

**Scene.** { A ROOM IN THE PALACE OF RUY BLAS. PLATFORM C. AT BACK, ACCESSIBLE BY STEPS. STAND OF ARMS ON PLATFORM. RUY BLAS DISCOVERED.

*Ruy.*

The night has fallen, and yet he does not come. The base design he has in hand, no doubt, requires the veil of darkness; but that concerns not me; for I shall be no more his instrument. Reflection has brought calm and resolution to my soul. My first unworthy fears I've found were for myself. I thought but of my own disgrace. He threatened with exposure—death. I can brave both to serve—save her, and my obedience ends when he exacts the slightest service that approaches wrong. Nay, I will arrest him in despite his threats. Let him denounce! His head, as well as mine, shall fall, and she can have no other foe. Did she not buy my life—my heart and soul—in one sweet word, when she said she loved me? They are but held to sacrifice them for her sake. Yet, when she learns I was a mere impostor—will not her heart revolt and loathe itself for having ever changed a thought with mine? But no; unselfish love will joy to perish for her sake, and in her own high-wrought and noble nature she will have an instinct of my truth. Yes; in the sanctuary of her pure breast my memory will thenceforth be shined, and oft receive a votive tear. Who would not die a thousand deaths for that sweet hope? Yes—yes; all's well! She's safe beyond the reach of harm.

[*Enter Queen* R. U. E.

*Queen.*

Don Cæsar!



*Ruy.*

Great heaven! The queen—alone—and here—O,  
fatal snare! Hell triumphs! She is lost—madam —

*Queen.*

Wherefore, that fearful cry and start—Don Cæsar?

*Ruy.*

What brought—who bade you to come here?

*Queen.*

You.

*Ruy.*

I—In heaven's name! when?

*Queen.*

I received from you —

*Ruy.*

O, speak! Speak quickly.

*Queen.*

A letter.

*Ruy.*

From me!

*Queen.*

Written certainly by you.

*Ruy.*

What mystery is this? I wrote no letter —

*Queen.*

Read that.

*Gives letter.*

*Ruy.*

[*Reads.*

“My queen My heart's queen! a doom of danger  
hangs o'er my head—thou canst avert the blow, and only  
thou. Come to me instantly! Without thee, I am lost.”  
—O hell-born plot! I had forgot that letter. Madam —  
begone!



*Queen.*

Begone! Don Cæsar! this indignity? Have I been summoned but for this—O, heaven! are you then false? If so, what have I done?

*Ruy.*

Ay—what indeed! Destroyed thyself!

*Queen.*

For mercy—how?

*Ruy.*

I cannot explain—there is no time—fly—hence—begone!

*Queen.*

I had some fear, and was about to send a messenger—

*Ruy.*

O, heaven! with every fleeting moment seems to flow a life drop from thy heart—away!

*Queen.*

Hold, I understand—you do expect, and momentarily, some dreadful blow, and would spare me the knowledge—I may protect and will remain.

*Ruy.*

Remain—and here!—

*Queen.*

The letter was indeed from you! but now the danger you would brave alone—

*Ruy.*

No—understand—

*Queen.*

I do—first impulse made you write that letter which your after care for me would fain recall.





*Ruy.*

I wrote no letter to thee—I am a demon—Fly—O, it is you, poor lady, whom the danger threatens! It is you that hell assails on every side—O! can I find no way to convince you? Think how great my love—to save thee from the snare—the pit of horror to the fatal verge of which thou hast been lured—I would tear my heart from out my breast. O, then believe me that thy presence here imperils both. Go—O, go at once!

*Queen.*

Don Cæsar ——

*Ruy.*

Pause not—but fly—Thou wast not seen to enter?

*Queen.*

Not to be recognized, I think—but seen I was.

*Ruy.*

O, heaven! by whom?

*Queen.*

A man, cloaked and masked, stood in the shadow of the portico ——

*Ruy.*

Masked? Did he not speak? Who was it, can you guess?

[*Enter Don Salluste* R. U. E.]

*Sal.*

'T was I!

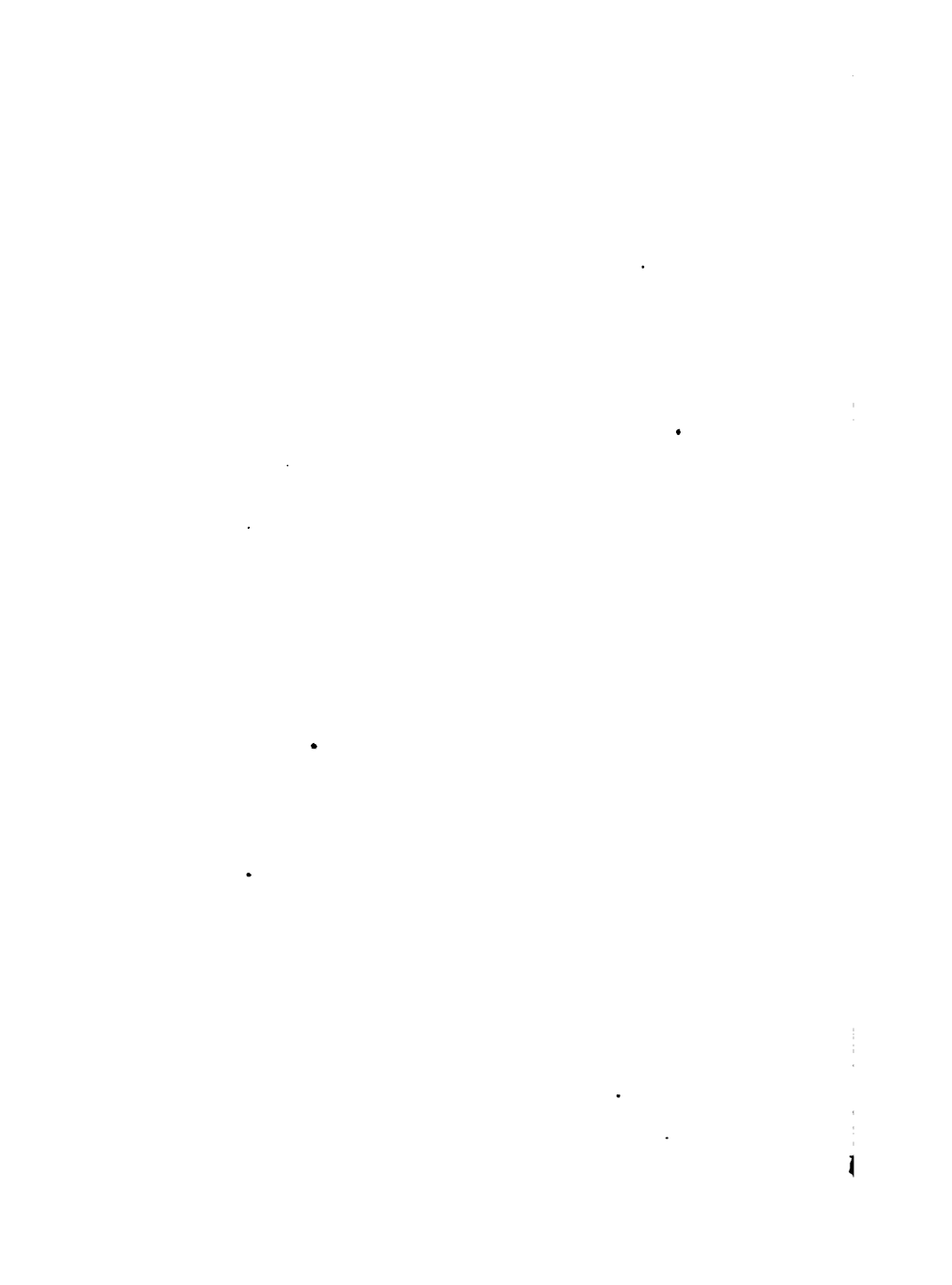
[*Dropping cloak.*

*Ruy.*

O, horror! Fly, madam!

*Sal.*

It is too late; the Princess de Neubourg is no longer queen of Spain.



*Queen.*

Don Salluste!

*Sal.*

Forever now the compeer of this man.

*Queen.*

Gracious heaven! it is a snare indeed—and Don Cæsar——

*Ruy.*

Alas, madam! thou seest now what thou hast done.

*Sal.*

[*To Queen.*

I hold you in the toils, but, as I am about to speak without anger to your majesty, pray, listen calmly. I have found you—we'll not noise the matter—alone, with Don Cæsar, in his chamber, at night. This fact proven or admitted will suffice to annul your contract and mock marriage, made by proxy, with the king. That scandal of inquiry may be avoided, sign for me this letter to his majesty. I shall have it transmitted by the grand usher to the state chancellor. As for *you*, without is a carriage prepared, in which I have placed a store of gold. Depart—both of you—I shall aid your flight: without being molested you can go by Toledo, and from Alcantara enter Portugal. Go where you please—we will not seek you. Obey in this, and I swear to you that no one, save myself, shall know of this affair: refuse, and all Madrid shall ring with it to-morrow. You have no alternative—you are in my hand. See, madam—your signature to this is all you have to write.

*Queen.*

I am in his power.

*Sal.*

I ask nothing but your written admission of the fact, to give the king.



You see, my friend, how I toil to ensure your happiness.  
 [To Ruy.  
 [To Queen.

Your signature.

What shall I do — *Queen.*

*Sal.*

Sign. Do not hesitate. You lose nothing but a loveless crown—you gain heart-happiness, for a joyless throne—a good exchange. All the household are asleep; no one knows of this save our three selves. If you will not sign, you subject yourself to public scandal—infamy—the cloister, and it may be—death.

Merciful powers! *Queen.*

*Sal.*

You are really free—the princess of Neubourg still—your marriage a state fiction; Don Cæsar loves you—he is worthy; to that I pledge my honour. He is of a noble house—almost a prince. He is duke of Olmedo—a Bazan, and grandee of Spain.

Hold! *Ruy.*

My name is Ruy Blas! I'm a lacquey!  
 [Ruy rushes forward.

What said he — *Queen.*

*Ruy.*

I said my name is Ruy Blas—my station—this man's valet.

You and I make a vile and miserable pair: I have the lacquey's garb—you the lacquey's soul.  
 [To Don Salluste.



*Sal.*

'T is true. This man is indeed my valet.

[*To Ruy, who goes up c.*

Fall back, and silence, sir.

*Queen.*

Great heaven! I am punished for my dream.

*Sal.*

He spoke too soon, and told too much; but, no matter now; my vengeance is sufficiently complete. What think you—is it not? How loudly will the court and city laugh to-morrow! You degraded me—ha! ha!—I dethrone you. You banished—drove me from Madrid; I hunt you from society. You offered me your attendant for a wife; I have given you my lacquey for a lover. Ha—ha—ha! When the king divorces you, you had better wed this valet. Take him to Neubourg and have him made a duke,—that you may still, at least, be a duchess. Ah, you debased and triumphed over me, yet dared to sleep in peace—vain idiot that you were —

[*Ruy locks door, and then stealthily approaches Don Salluste, and quickly takes his sword.*

*Ruy.*

Villain! You insult your queen

[*Don Salluste goes towards door.*

No need of that—the door is fast. No one can enter here—nor friend, nor follower—none but the fiend himself—the fiend, who, until now, hath gratified thy every wish; but who, if he would save thee now, must in person come and battle for the prize! 'T is now my turn—my day! I hold thee in a grasp of iron!

[*To Queen.*

Your pardon, madam. This man has no soul—no feeling; nothing human save the form. Yesterday, my torture was his triumph—he trod on me—he mocked and laughed at my despair—he struck me on the heart! He





made me play the menial in the council hall, where, but an hour before, I was dictator. He saw me weep, and smiled: he heard me pray, and sneered: I—I cannot paint his savage triumph.

[*To Don Salluste.*

Fiend! was't not enough, but you must now insult your queen! Wretch! to thy knees; and kiss the dust before her! But no, approach her not; we crush a serpent when it hisses in our path; and when a coward trickster plots, not merely 'gainst a woman's life, but 'gainst her dearer fame—intrigues to rob his sovereign, not of her diadem alone, but of the chaplet crown which virtue consecrates—to make suspicion's hot breath sear her stainless brow—be he lord or hind, 't is each man's duty, first, to spit upon, and then with dagger, sword—no matter what—destroy! Lord! marquis! duke! Thy lacquey triumphs! In me behold thy executioner!

*Sal.*

Give me, at least, a sword, and let us meet on equal terms.

*Ruy.*

On equal terms! Lord marquis, sure you jest! What! A gentleman cross swords with his own valet. Fie! Stoop to fight a duel with a slave! a dog! whom 't was thy privilege to whip; but who, in turn will smite thee—yea, smite thee, marquis, as the shepherd smites the treacherous dog that seeks to wolf the lamb.

*Queen.*

Have mercy—spare him!

*Ruy.*

Though an angel for the demon pleads, it is in vain.

*Sal.*

Assassin!



*Ruy.*

No! Avenger! There's no escape—no help—no hope! I greet thee like thy destiny.

*[Queen throws her arms around Ruy, to restrain him.]*

*Sal.*

His eye is terrible.

*[Hurried music. Don Salluste rushes up steps c., and seizes a sword from stand of arms on platform above.]*

Ha! Ha! we're equal now!

*Ruy.*

Not so. Thy crimes weigh thee down, and heaven's wrath is on my sword. 'T is fate decrees my arm thy punishment!

*[Ruy releases himself from the Queen, as he speaks, and follows Don Salluste. They fight and Don Salluste is killed. Queen, overwhelmed, sinks into chair R. Ruy covers the body of Don Salluste with cloak.]*

Madam, you are saved. Your enemy lies dead.

*Queen.*

*[Rising, and shrinking back.]*

O, heaven!

*Ruy.*

O, have no fear! I'll not approach—I dare not. I would but say I'm not so guilty as you think. Love made me weak—blind—foolish; but not base. Have pity!

*Queen.*

What would you, sir?

*Ruy.*

Thy pardon.

*Queen.*

Never!



*Ruy.*

Never? Then I've done with life. [*Drinks poison.*  
Sad flame, expire.

*Queen.*

What said you?

*Ruy.*

Nothing. My sins now end—nothing. You curse me  
and I bless you—nothing more.

*Queen.*

[*Troubled.*

Don Cæsar! What have you done—what would you  
do—you do not speak—your cheek grows pale—I  
pardon—I believe—I—I love you, Cæsar!

*Ruy.*

My name is Ruy Blas.

*Queen.*

Ruy Blas! I pardon thee—I—I love thee, Ruy Blas!  
—Paler and paler still! Thou diest! I might have  
saved thee!

*Ruy.*

No! no! my queen! Had thine avowal bade me live  
—it could not be! 'T was fated—and so best. Had I  
indeed been duke, my life were still a curse to thee. The  
lacquey's love to sadness added shame. Yet I may hope  
for pardon—blessing thee for thy past love—and pity  
now. Had I lived, my love had poisoned all thy happi-  
ness. I am repaid. You forgive—you love me! 'T is  
all I lived for, and is worth dying for. Fly—fly, my  
queen—O, fly, at once! Here, take the key—begone!  
Thy secret's safe! The only witness of thy presence here  
—now dies—dies most happy, in thy arms. My queen!  
Adieu! [*Music, very low and mournful. Picture.*

CURTAIN.





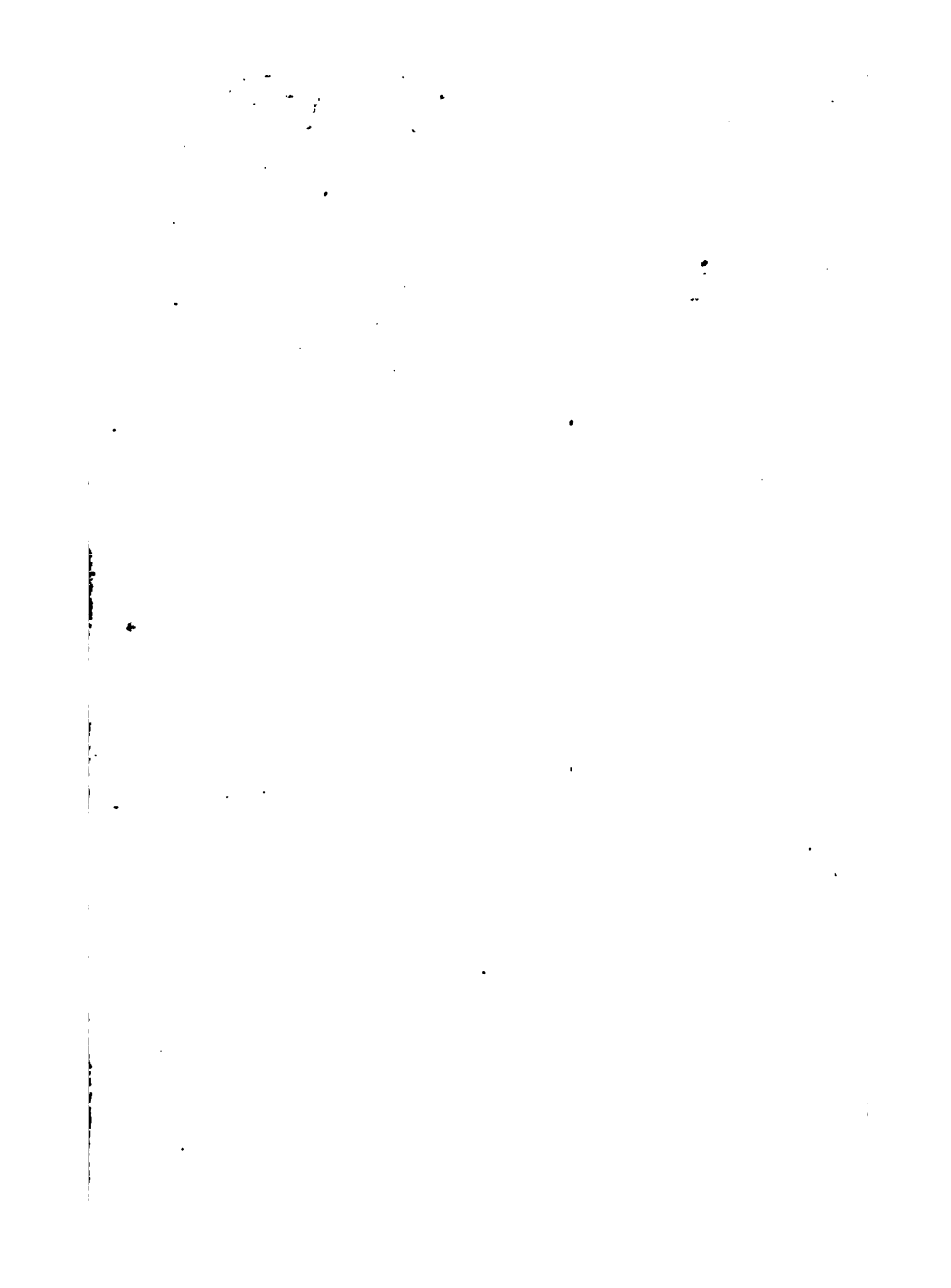


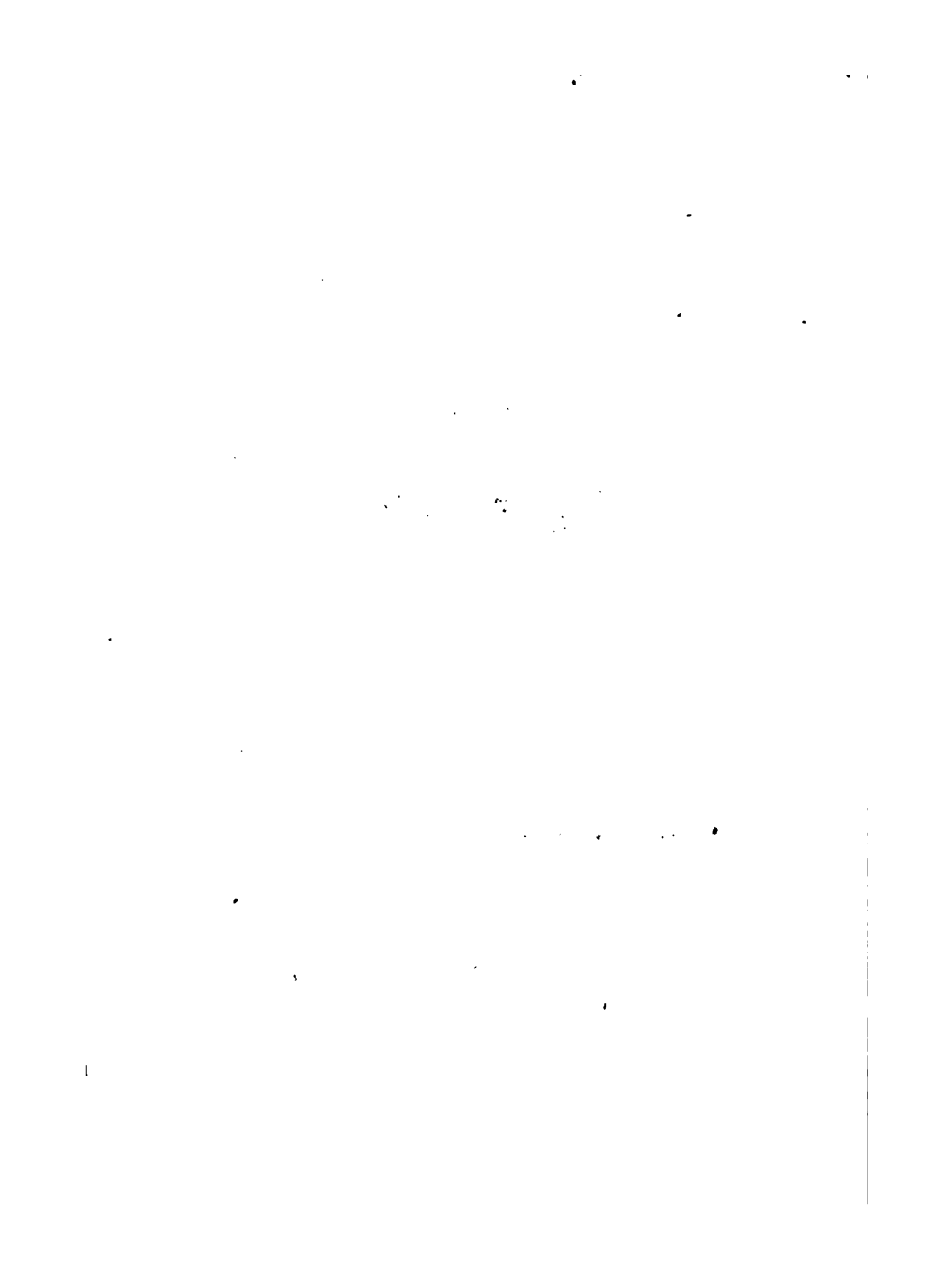






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